

that the President was right in what he did, nor shall it be said that he was wrong, principally because it doesn't matter; the point is, whether or not the facts of history bear out General Weaver's forecast, and common justice would seem to make one say that it does not. As to the question of money, that is something which no administration has yet been able to dodge or ignore, and it is hardly probable that the next one will be a record-breaker in this particular; and the same may be said of recent years regarding transportation.

The trouble all through with General Weaver seems to be that he looks at things through the colored glasses of the politician (which he certainly is, and a smart one, too), and not with the comprehensive, unobstructed gaze of the statesman. Personally he is an altogether unobjectionable man, of cosmopolitan tendencies, catholicity of view and of great tolerance for opposing ideas; having become somewhat acquainted with the gentleman, it may be said that we speak advisedly. But neither he nor anyone else need hope to be a ruling power or to head one by denying to others a just meed of praise for honorable service or forestalling what they may do hereafter by baseless if not fanciful predictions.

The People's party is now a recognized factor in the political economy of the United States. It starts out better than some of the third parties did, gaining more electoral votes for instance than either the Anti-Masonic party in 1852, or the Know-Nothings in 1856. It represents more advanced principles and a less bigoted purpose than either of them, and ought to do better. It should also be borne in mind, in order to establish a thorough analysis, that in no state and but few if any congressional districts could it have been successful without the vote of the Democrats. Look at the result: Wherever the People's party stood alone or opposed the Democracy it has generally failed; where they have worked together success has been the outcome in nearly every case. Is it not so? Then would not General Weaver's exhortation and denunciation of the Democratic party just at this juncture seem to be rather bad politics and in rather bad taste, if nothing more serious?

It is quite probable that we of the West will have to rely somewhat upon the People's party to assist us in obtaining the rehabilitation of silver with the function of full money, since both the old parties are more or less opposed to it. It will thus be seen that the new third party has a high and honorable purpose which should not be disparaged or curtailed through the injudicious adoption of a batch of ideas which appeal principally to the rabble. Nothing can be done without means, of course, and as the national government is exclusive in the matter of monetary coinage and issues, what can the People's party or its friends hope to accomplish in the direction indicated for some years to come if it stands by itself and abuses those who might be won over? Four years hence, on a platform whose distinctive features shall be silver redemption—if in the meantime it shall not have been accomplished—the adjustment of national and state traffic

and circulation, and kindred matters; that organization might dictate what the government's policy should be, even if it did not actually control. To this end its energies should be bent, and its leaders should be instructed to cease the wiles of demagoguery wherever they are prone to practice them, and cultivate the arts of patriotism and statecraft. Meantime, all hands will watch the movements and achievements of the new party with a great deal of interest, realizing as they do that it is the architect of its own fortunes.

#### A SURE THING.

Those who were not victimized by means of bets on the Presidential election are not yet out of the toils if they are in a sportive mood at all; the wiles of the "plunger" have not altogether disappeared because the contest is over, he is now on the lookout for other game. One of the "catches" afloat has been worked to some extent in this city; it originated in the East and is thus explained:

Two men came into an editor's office and one of them said:

"Here's the bet we want you to decide: I bet that four months to a day after Cleveland becomes President every national bank in the United States will be closed."

"Yes, that's it," said the other better. "I bet they wouldn't."

"Supposing you wait and see," suggested the newspaper man appealed to.

"But what's the use of waiting?" persisted the first. "Isn't four months to a day from the fourth of March the Fourth of July? Won't the banks be closed everywhere?"

And they went away wrangling, while the newspaper man hid his blushing and ashamed face behind his desk, and the bet still remains to be decided.

#### THE COAL CRIMINALITY.

Let us hypothesize for a moment.

The majority of the 60,000 residents of this city are in moderate circumstances and have to buy their necessary articles in smaller quantities than the more fortunate few can. With the approach of cold weather they have to purchase more fuel two or three times over than during the summer, and this item thus becomes one of considerable importance to them. If they were able to buy a carload it would be a great gain, as they would at least get the benefit of wholesale rates and approximately correct measurement; but they cannot do this and their almost universal resort is to the middleman, whose terms and treatment they must put up with whether it suits them or not. People in want of coal in this winter are not prone to argument over losses sustained or injuries inflicted; they must do the best they can and do it at once, or there will be other injuries which will not be so easily repaired, inflicted at home.

Suppose we take what seems a fair, average case. A citizen goes to a dealer and orders a ton of coal, which he must have with reasonable dispatch, and pays for it at the time of ordering, otherwise no attention is paid to him; so he hands over \$5.50 in cash as a consideration for 2000 pounds

of fuel. Most people at a distance, knowing that such an amount is exacted for an article that exists in sufficient quantities to supply the United States and almost within gunshot of the city, would be tempted to ask if there are any grand juries in this part of the country, and if so, if they themselves should not be indicted for non-feasance; but no matter as to that; for the sake of the argument but for no other reason we will admit that the coal is worth the \$5.50 paid. After the lapse of four or five days, and the buyer has perhaps been out of coal for say half that time, the fuel is delivered—not the 2000 pounds that he contracted and paid for, but 1500 pounds. This adds \$1.37½ to the price; on investigation the buyer finds that about twenty per cent of his purchase is dust and dirt, utterly unfit for any purpose under the sun—except to keep up the dealer's profits; this little circumstance adds \$1.10 more to the cost, so that counting nothing as a loss for the two days that he has had nothing to burn, he has paid \$7.97½—practically \$8—for enough fuel to last him two or three weeks with the greatest economy! This kind of thing does not represent an isolated case here by any means; on the contrary it is quite common, and it is only one phase of the evil.

The railroads first, and then the dealers, have us completely at their mercy. We can get nothing of any consequence to burn except at their hands and upon their terms. Suppose a man has a coal mine of his own not far away but too far to enable him to have its product transported by wagon and team at a profit; the railroad tariff is so prohibitive that it is less of a loss to him to patronize the monopoly outright, and as the lesser of two evils he does so. He realizes that he is being robbed not only by the "protective tariff" of exorbitant freightage, but by those who stand near to the barons and virtually control the whole traffic; but what can he do? If he protests he is informed by the chief and the secondary robber in concert that he is not compelled to take their coal if he don't like their terms and goods, and that is a hard fact—one of those hard, stern facts which sometimes make a people get together and devise means for their own disenthralment. That is what must be done here.

Cheap transportation is of course the only means of untying the Gordian knot. To have this we must have a line of rails and some rolling stock connecting with the nearest coal measure of sufficient proportions to insure a constant supply. This line must be held and owned by the people directly or indirectly; and it must be so arranged that it can never be absorbed by a trunk line or other commercial cormorant. Fifty thousand people in this city would patronize it, at a very low estimate, ten cents a month each, for transporting coal alone, and its other business ought to amount to as much more. Would not \$10,000 a month patronage insured for a short narrow gauge road, which need not rush things very much and could be inexpensively conducted after being built and equipped, pay the interest on mortgage bonds and a good dividend besides? Add to this what the foundries and